

12 October 2006



Stanhope Wins Civil Justice Award for Terror Stance

ACT Chief Minister Jon Stanhope is this year's winner of the Australian Lawyers Alliance (ALA) 2006 Civil Justice Award for his stance against the Howard Government's anti-terror laws.

Mr Stanhope took a strong stance on human rights by defying the Federal Attorney General by opening up draft anti terrorism legislation to public scrutiny, posting it on his web site.

He continues to campaign for a fair trial for David Hicks – including making the brave and controversial step of nominating his father Terry, for father of the year in 2006.

Accepting the award, Stanhope said:

“No one wants to be the odd one out, but to make a difference in society sometimes we need to stand up and make difficult decisions.

At a time when the global threat of terror is seeing governments impinge on our civil liberties, it is more important than ever to take a stand for the rights of individuals.”

ALA National President Simon Morrison said the undermining of individual rights in the name of national security was the defining legal development of 2006.

“Time and time again, Jon has been a lone voice of power in pursuit of good. He is a true representative of the people, who is not swayed by big business. Jon Stanhope is one man who is working to make Australia a more just society.” said Simon Morrison, National President

This is the first time the award has been given to a politician. Previous award winners include asbestos campaigner Bernie Banton, Queensland children's rights campaigner Hetty Jonston, former intelligence analyst Andrew Wilkie and lawyer Jennifer Beck who exposed unsafe practices at a WA hospital.

The award will be presented during the Lawyers Alliance national conference in Sanctuary Cove Queensland on Friday 13 October.

ENDS

The Australian Lawyers Alliance is the leading advocate of the rights of individual litigants in the justice system. Nominations for the annual Civil Justice Award come from members and the national board votes for the winner.

For more information, please contact Gemma Swart at the ALA 0414 873 291

For interviews with Jon Stanhope, please contact Penelope Layland 0438 289 714